

Environmental Sustainability Policy

NQS

QA3	3.2.3	Environmentally responsible - The service cares for the environment and supports children to become environmentally responsible.
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QA6	6.1.1	Engagement with the service - Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
	6.2.3	Community engagement - The service builds relationships and engages with its local community.

MTOP

LO2	Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment
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Aim

Our service aims to help children learn about and implement sustainable practices and foster respect and care for the living and non-living environment.

Implementation

Children develop positive attitudes and values about sustainable practices by engaging in learning experiences, joining in discussions that explore solutions to environmental issues, and watching adults model sustainable practices. Children learn to live interdependently with the environment.

Environmental Sustainability and our Curriculum

- Our educators will promote a holistic, open ended curriculum which explores ideas and practices for environmental sustainability and helps children understand the interdependence between people and the environment by:

- connecting children to nature through art and play and allowing children to experience the natural environment through natural materials like wood, stone sand and recycled materials and plants including native vegetation.
- celebrating childrens' environmental knowledge and sustainable activities.
- involving children in nature walks, education about plants and gardening and growing plants and flowers from seed.
- Taking the children for visits to the Veggie patch in the GELC, allowing them to care for the plants and water them.
- engaging children in learning about the food cycle by growing, harvesting, and cooking herbs for our service kitchen.
- using resource kits and information on environmental issues from the Better Business Partnership or resources targeted at early childhood services such as "The Little Green Steps" Resource kits on Water, Waste and Wildlife.
- enlisting the help of groups with expertise in environmental issues, for example bush care groups, wildlife rescue groups, Clean Up Australia, to deliver elements of our sustainability program
- acknowledging and celebrating environmental awareness events like Clean Up Australia Day and Walk to School Day.

The Role of Educators

- Our educators will model sustainable practices by embedding sustainability into all aspects of the daily running of our service operations including:
 - recycling materials for curriculum and learning activities
 - minimising waste and effectively using service resources
 - turning off equipment and lights when not in use
 - using the least hazardous cleaning substance appropriate for the situation, for example, ordinary detergent for cleaning dirt from tables and other surfaces.
 - maintaining a no dig vegetable/herb garden
 - incorporating water wise strategies such as drip irrigation and ensuring taps are turned off and leaks fixed.
 - using food that we have grown in meals on our weekly menu
 - implementing environmentally friendly pest management

Partnerships with Families and the Community

- Our educators will facilitate collaborative partnerships with local community groups, government agencies and private companies to enhance and support childrens' learning about sustainable practices. We will share their brochures and fact sheets on sustainable practices like

recycling, saving water and power and green cleaning with our children and their families. Families will be encouraged to participate in decision making and information sharing about environmental sustainability through our newsletters, parent input forms, wall displays, meetings.

- We will place recycling bins out the front of the building so families can drop off art supplies, toys and games for us to reuse in our centre.

The NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network has resources which may assist Early Childhood Services to identify and work towards an Environmentally Sustainable Service. The Network's website also has links to many organisations and Government agencies that provide information on sustainable practices at <http://www.eceen.org.au/links.htm>

Source

National Quality Standard

My Time Our Place

Climbing the little green steps 2007: Gosford and Wyong Councils

Environmental Education in Early Childhood (Victoria) Inc

NSW Early Childhood Environmental Education Network

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Last reviewed: 1st May 2021 Date for next review: 1st May 2022